

# NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



## AS I SEE IT

### **Do Your Homework with the NC School Report Cards**

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As a former principal and superintendent, some of the most productive relationships I had were with informed parents, business leaders and community members. While these people did not work with students in the classroom every day, they did their homework, and asked important and targeted questions about district and school data, and made good suggestions for improvement. As a result, they were some of our strongest school partners and most effective student advocates.

As taxpayers, every one invests in public education and should be engaged in what is happening in public schools. That is why each October, the NC Department of Public Instruction updates the School Report Cards website at [www.ncreportcards.org](http://www.ncreportcards.org). This site is the state's most comprehensive resource for information on student achievement and attendance, class size, school safety, teacher quality at school, district and state levels and is utilized by many who make decisions about K-12 education in our state.

The NC School Report Cards website, which will be updated with 2009-10 data on Oct. 28, is easy to access, search and navigate. School Profile, High Student Performance, Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools, and Quality Teachers tabs at the top of the page serve as a table of contents for every district's and school's Report Card as well as the state-level Report Card.

The High Student Performance tab includes information about how students performed on state end-of-grade or end-of-course tests by grade level, by subject and demographic group. Individual school Report Cards also include a designation under the state's ABCs accountability model. The Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools tab highlights data for school safety, student attendance and instructional resources, which includes how many books are in school libraries and how many classrooms are connected to the Internet. And the Quality Teachers tab provides information about the number of teachers who are fully-licensed and/or have advanced degrees or National Board Certification, and the percent of teachers that are classified as Highly Qualified as defined by the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

Each district and school faces unique challenges so the North Carolina School Report Cards do not rank any one as 'better' than another. That is one reason why this website should only be a first stop for information about public education. Teachers should be able to answer more detailed questions about curriculum while principals and local administrators can provide more insight on student achievement and school performance.

The School Report Cards website provides meaningful data about our 2,500 public and charter schools, but you should not limit research efforts to this one site. Ask questions of teachers and school and district leaders to find out how you can be a better school partner and student advocate. As stakeholders in public education, we all have a role to play in improving education and increasing student success and the NC School Report Cards will help you do your part.

Bill Harrison, Chairman  
State Board of Education